

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article defining a longitudinal direction, a front portion in the longitudinal direction, a rear portion, and a middle portion arranged between said portions, the article comprising:

an upper, liquid-permeable cover sheet,

a lower, liquid-impermeable cover sheet,

an absorption body arranged between the cover sheets, and

first and second side barriers along respective longitudinal sides, each side barrier in turn comprising at least one longitudinal elastic element, said first and second side barriers, viewed from above, defining a shape which narrows in the direction towards said front portion so that the distance, in the transverse direction of the article, between said elastic elements, is greater in said rear portion than in said front portion,

each side barrier is arranged such that, when it is secured in contact with said front portion, each side barrier and the upper cover sheet define a folded structure of substantially Z-shaped cross section with a fold directed towards the inside of said article,

~~wherein each side barrier is a separate component from the upper and lower cover sheets~~

wherein the at least one longitudinal elastic element of each side barrier is positioned at or near the fold directed towards the inside of the article.

2. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the first side barrier is secured to said cover sheet so that a first longitudinal fold is defined, and in that the second side barrier is secured to said cover sheet so that a second longitudinal fold is defined.

3. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 2, wherein the elastic element in the first side barrier, viewed from above, is secured to said rear portion outside the first longitudinal fold, and in that the elastic element in the second side barrier, viewed from above, is secured to said rear portion outside the second longitudinal fold.

4. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, further comprising a rear barrier formed in said rear portion, which rear barrier is intended for taking up bodily excretions in the direction rearwards along said article.

5. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 4, wherein said rear barrier comprises a further elastic element.

6. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 5, wherein said further elastic element, when viewed from above, extends outside ~~and overlaps~~ rear attachment points of the elastic elements in the side barriers,

wherein said further elastic element comprises attachment points, when viewed from above, extend outside the rear attachment points of the elastic elements in the side barriers, a barrier being defined along the longitudinal sides and rear side of said article.

7. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein said first side barrier comprises a first elastic element and a second elastic element, said second side barrier comprises a third elastic element and a fourth elastic element, said first elastic element extending outside the second elastic element viewed in relation to a longitudinal axis of symmetry through said article, and said third elastic element extending outside the fourth elastic element viewed in relation to said axis of symmetry.

8. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the distance between the elastic elements of the side barriers is at least two times greater at said rear portion than at said front portion.

9. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the distance between the elastic elements of the side barriers is at least three times greater at said rear portion than at said front portion.
10. (Previously Presented) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the distance between parts of the elastic elements in the side barriers nearest to the inside of said article is within the range of 1 – 3 cm at said front portion.
11. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the elastic elements run at least partially in contact with said folds in each side barrier.
12. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the said first and second side barriers by themselves constitute a combined side leakage protection and leg elastic for said article.
13. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the said elastic elements consist of elastic threads.
14. (Canceled)
15. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article defining a longitudinal direction, a front portion in the longitudinal direction, a rear portion, and a middle portion arranged between said portions, the article comprising:
  - an upper, liquid-permeable cover sheet,
  - a lower, liquid-impermeable cover sheet,
  - an absorption body arranged between the cover sheets, and
  - first and second side barriers along respective longitudinal sides, each side barrier in turn comprising at least one longitudinal elastic element, said first and second side barriers, viewed from above, defining a shape which narrows in the direction towards said front portion so that the distance, in the transverse direction of the article, between said elastic elements, is greater in said rear portion than in said front portion,

each side barrier is arranged such that, when it is secured in contact with said front portion, each side barrier and the upper cover sheet define a folded structure of substantially Z-shaped cross section with a fold directed towards the inside of said article,

wherein the at least one longitudinal elastic element of each side barrier is positioned at or near the fold directed towards the inside of the article;

the article further comprising a rear barrier formed in said rear portion, which rear barrier is intended for taking up bodily excretions in the direction rearwards along said article,

wherein said rear barrier comprises a further elastic element,

wherein said further elastic element, when viewed from above, extends outside ~~and overlaps~~ rear attachment points of the elastic elements in the side barriers,

wherein said further elastic element comprises attachment points, when viewed from above, extend outside the rear attachment points of the elastic elements in the side barriers, a barrier being defined along the longitudinal sides and rear side of said article.